

Clean Water 2020



Columbia's Clear Vision For Clean Water

Our Main Goal: Reduce and Stop Sanitary Sewer Overflows



What is a Sanitary Sewer Overflow?

A Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) is a discharge of raw sewage, sometimes mixed with stormwater during wet weather, which overflows from a sewer onto the ground or into local streams and rivers. SSOs occur when wastewater exceeds the capacity of the sewer system, pump station, or treatment plant, particularly after heavy rain storms.



What causes SSOs?

SSOs have a variety of causes:

- Sewer defects that allow stormwater and groundwater to overload the system
- Inadequate sewer capacity
- Blockages
- Infrastructure at the end of its useful life
- Equipment failures
- Root invasion
- Power failures
- Vandalism

The untreated sewage from these SSOs contaminates area water bodies, causing potential serious health risks.

